



**U.S. Department of Education**  
**Grant Performance Report Cover Sheet (ED 524B)**

OMB No. 1894-0003  
Exp. 02/28/2011

*Check only one box per Program Office instructions.*  
☐ Annual Performance Report    ☐ Final Performance Report

**General Information**

1. PR/Award #: H323A050006                      2. Grantee NCES ID#: 30  
(Block 5 of the Grant Award Notification - 11 characters.)                      (See instructions. Up to 12 characters.)
- 3 Project Title: Project STRIDE: Strengthening Teacher Retention, Instructional Design, and Evaluation  
(Enter the same title as on the approved application.)
4. Grantee Name (Block 1 of the Grant Award Notification.): Montana Office of Public Instruction
5. Grantee Address (See instructions.) PO Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501
6. Project Director (See instructions.) Name: Tim Harris                      Title: Project Director  
Ph #: (406) 444-4429                      Ext: (    )                      Fax #: (406) 444-3924  
Email Address: tharris@mt.gov

**Reporting Period Information (See instructions.)**

7. Reporting Period:    From: 07/01/2009    To: 06/30/2010    (mm/dd/yyyy)

**Budget Expenditures (To be completed by your Business Office. See instructions. Also see Section B.)**

8. Budget Expenditures

	Federal Grant Funds	Non-Federal Funds (Match/Cost Share)
a. Previous Budget Period	\$637,514.00	
b. Current Budget Period	\$782,360.64	
c. Entire Project Period (For Final Performance Reports only)	\$3,098,962.05	

**Indirect Cost Information (To be completed by your Business Office. See instructions.)**

9. Indirect Costs

- a. Are you claiming indirect costs under this grant? ☒ Yes    ☐ No
- b. If yes, do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal Government? ☒ Yes    ☐ No
- c. If yes, provide the following information:  
Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: 7/1/2007    To: 6/30/2010    (mm/dd/yyyy)  
Approving Federal agency: ☒ ED    Other (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of Rate (For Final Performance Reports Only): ☐ Provisional    ☐ Final    ☒ Other (Please specify): Predetermined
- d. For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:  
☒ Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement?  
☐ Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)?

**Human Subjects (Annual Institutional Review Board (IRB) Certification) (See instructions.)**

10. Is the annual certification of Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval attached? ☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☒ N/A

**Performance Measures Status and Certification (See instructions.)**

11. Performance Measures Status

- a. Are complete data on performance measures for the current budget period included in the Project Status Chart? ☒ Yes    ☐ No
- b. If no, when will the data be available and submitted to the Department? \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (mm/dd/yyyy)

12. To the best of my knowledge and belief, all data in this performance report are true and correct and the report fully discloses all known weaknesses concerning the accuracy, reliability, and completeness of the data.

Denise Juneau  
Name of Authorized Representative:

Title: Superintendent, Montana Office of Public Instruction

Nadelyn Zunilar, Chief of Staff  
Signature: for Denise Juneau

Date: 09/29/2010





U.S. Department of Education  
Grant Performance Report (ED 524B)  
Executive Summary

OMB No. 1894-0003  
Exp. 02/28/2011

PR/Award # (11 characters): H323A050006

(See Instructions)

Montana's State Personnel Development Grant included a set of focused and purposeful professional development activities implemented across the five-year grant period. During the project period (2005-2010), professional development initiatives detailed in the approved grant proposal were ~~are~~ implemented, and have demonstrated expansion or continued integration across the time frame of this project. All activities were focused on increasing student access to skilled teachers and educationally responsive classrooms as the means of improving academic outcomes. The grant objectives and associated activities focused on three major goals: (1) increasing access to the general education curriculum; (2) support to implement early intervening strategies; and (3) planned efforts that focus on the recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers. The information in Section A of the Project Status Charts report accomplishments that have occurred during the last three months of Project Year 4 through the end of Project Year 5 -June 30, 2010. Information in the remainder of this summary addresses activities and outcomes for the entire project period. This information is discussed within the framework of the three project goal areas.

**Goal 1. Access to the General Education Curriculum.**

The *We Teach All* initiative focused on access to the general education curriculum. This initiative has been supported with SPDG dollars since the beginning of this funding cycle. Through this initiative, professional development in the areas of differentiated instruction and co-teaching, two practices with a body of evidence indicating their effectiveness in making classrooms more responsive to student diversity, was provided. With the additional demands that RTI places on a regular education teacher, we have seen schools demonstrate a renewed interest in such practices as a means of providing responsive Tier 1 instruction in the general education classroom.

During the final grant year, We Teach All consultants and school personnel from a school that has adopted differentiated instruction practices at a high level have provided a series of seven webinars on differentiated instruction and co-teaching. The webinars were done live and then posted on the OPI website as a readily available source of additional training and information for educators and parents that will be available for access on an ongoing basis. In addition, these consultants and the high implementing team provided professional development through on-site coaching, webinars for specific districts, and regional institute presentations, a continuation of approaches implemented in earlier years of the grant. In addition, in-depth training was conducted regionally by a nationally recognized consultant group on differentiated instruction skills. These regional trainings were well attended by schools and districts implementing RTI.

Collectively, these activities represent a sustained agenda of professional development activities in an area of high priority in efforts to increase access to and progress in the general education curriculum for students with disabilities.

During previous years, another focal area under this curriculum access goal was working in collaboration with Montana's *Reading First* initiative. The SPDG dollars were leveraged to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities were addressed in this statewide initiative. Since the Reading First dollars are no longer available, a different vehicle has been used to address issues of reading for students with disabilities. This has now been encompassed under the Goal 2 objective related to *Response to Intervention* (RTI).



## **Goal 2. Early Intervening Services.**

In 2005, when the SPDG proposal was developed, RTI was just beginning to appear on the radar at the state and local levels. For that reason, a series of objectives was developed to support the exploration and gradual implementation of this support model. In the first year of the grant, the primary activity in this area was a Response to Intervention (RTI) pilot project involving four districts in Montana. Information from this pilot was used to guide OPI's decisions about expansion of this initiative. During Project Year 2, 3 and 4, the Response to Intervention (RTI) project expanded from these four pilot sites to 41 elementary schools and 10 middle school and high schools. The four pilot sites continue their work as part of the statewide RTI project and continue to make advancements with RTI implementation, including math implementation. The pilot sites have also offered peer consulting and modeling. During Project Years 4 and 5, twenty-one RTI consultants/coaches were selected through an application process to work with the RTI school teams providing on-site training and technical assistance. Consultants/coaches visit school teams once a month. School teams report that this support is vital for them to continue working on RTI. The consultants/coaches attend the RTI trainings with the school teams and have been given additional in-depth training in the RTI components to enhance their coaching skills, evaluation skills and overall RTI process implementation. The training provided to RTI schools continues to be refined and standardized.

Starting in Project Year 2, the SPDG supported expansion efforts by drawing in the personnel and efforts of the regional Comprehensive System of Personnel Development teams. The project provided funding for ongoing RTI professional development to consultants working within these five regional organizations. This funding has continued since this time, resulting in over 130 school teams having received RTI awareness training as well as in depth RTI process implementation. In order to maintain a consistent approach to the model, the regions utilize the same trainers to provide this training. Two of the five regions have funded school level coaches with extensive background in reading comprehension, special education issues and RTI, to support implementation at the local level.

## **Goal 3. Teacher Training and Retention.**

The third goal of the SPDG addresses the need to ensure that students with disabilities are served by highly qualified and effective teachers. This led to the further development and expansion of mentoring programs, as well as work at the state level to provide a clear definition and mechanism for special educators to obtain the status of "highly qualified". At the preservice level, SPDG initiatives involved a cross-university group called the Higher Ed Consortium.

For the past eight years, a mentoring institute has been offered by OPI. This has been the vehicle through which basic and more advanced training has been made available to districts. During Project Year 5 a third cohort of mentor trainers received training, continuing to expand OPI's capacity to provide best-practice instruction to teacher leaders to support district mentor programs and new teachers in the classroom. This training institute has been partially funded by SPDG and is done in collaboration with Title I, Title II and the state teacher's union. In addition, awareness trainings that focused on the basics in developing a mentor program that follows best-practice models were provided in different regions in the state. District teams, who were at the beginning stages of establishing a teacher mentor program attended.

The SPDG has maintained its involvement with Montana's Higher Education Consortium (HEC) throughout the entire project period. The group, consisting of general and special education faculty from Montana universities, meets twice each year for the purposes of collaboration, problem-solving, and ongoing professional development. Additional activities of the HEC include the ongoing work of aligning curriculum, transferability across the university system, and teacher dispositions. Meetings provide an opportunity for SEA personnel to share information about state initiatives and activities, and frequently speakers who provide professional development to faculty in these areas. This is seen as a vehicle through which information incorporated into preservice training can be aligned with state priorities. During the final grant year, activities focused on making co-teaching part of the pre-



service student teacher placement. Faculty received training on working with student teachers utilizing a co-teaching model originally researched at the St. Cloud State University in Minnesota.

### **Other Project Accomplishments**

Improving the systems that are in place to gather and use evaluation data to guide the work of the project has been an area of focus throughout the project. Given the reliance upon the regional CSPD infrastructure to support the state's professional development initiatives, it has been important to work with these personnel to ensure the alignment of efforts, particularly as it relates to capturing performance data. During part of Project Year 4 and all of Project Year 5, an evaluation committee was formed to work on developing consistent evaluations that can be used in all regions for professional development sponsored by SPDG dollars or other sources. This committee had representation from each of the five CSPD regions, special education and general education providers of professional development, and members of other divisions at the OPI. The committee's work was done via conference calls, webinars, and a limited number of in-person meetings. The group used key resources (e.g., Evaluating Professional Development, by Tom Guskey; and Assessing Impact, by Joellen Killion) for discussion and reference of best practices in evaluation. The committee created a framework describing four levels of professional development, aligned with Guskey's work, that characterize a continuum of efforts extended from awareness training to training that focuses on fidelity of implementation and the cultural change of a school environment. Based on these levels, four different evaluation tools were developed that provide a consistent benchmark when receiving feedback and data regarding the training that occurred. The developed tools will continue to be used for regional and state training beyond the period of this project.

Finally, all of the initiatives that were part of this project have taken a number of forms, using strategies that meet nationally recognized standards for high-quality professional development (NSDC, 2001). They were aligned with improvement strategies for six performance indicators in Montana's State Performance Plan and were also aligned and coordinated with school improvement initiatives supported by Title I and Title II dollars. While systems of data collection and decision-making continue to require refinement, project evaluation was grounded in a Results and Performance Accountability philosophy to support a model of continuous improvement and outcome analyses.



U.S. Department of Education  
Grant Performance Report (ED 524B)  
Project Status Chart

PR/Award # (11 characters): **H323A050006**

**SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data** (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

**1. Project Objective** ☐ Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

Provide personnel with the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of, and improve the performance of, infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities.

1a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Percent of personnel receiving professional development through SPDG based on scientific- or evidence-based instructional practices.	PRGM	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			370 /948	39		4889/13743	36

1b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Percent of SPDG projects that have implemented personnel development/training activities that are aligned with improvement strategies identified in their State Performance Plan (SPP).	PRGM	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			4 /4	100		4 /4	100

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

The first objective, established for the SPDG projects by OSEP, addresses the need to utilize resources to provide effective services that lead to improved outcomes for young children and youth with disabilities. Achievement of this objective was measured in terms of the percent of personnel receiving SPDG-sponsored professional development based on evidence-based practices and the extent to which project initiatives were aligned with improvement strategies in Montana's State Performance Plan (SPP).

Data used to calculate these program measures were taken from professional development and training activity reports from April 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010; the Montana Office of Public Instruction Annual Data Collection for the 2009-2010 school year; and Montana's State Performance Plan, revised January, 2010. Activity reports were gathered in conjunction with three initiatives: Response to Intervention (RTI), Teacher Mentoring, and We Teach All.

Performance Measure 1a: This performance measure is calculated by dividing the number of school instructional/administrative personnel participating in training activities sponsored by the SPDG in the current grant cycle by the total number of school instructional administrative personnel employed in the state in the current grant cycle. School instructional/administrative personnel include teachers, paraprofessionals, principals, superintendents, and other administrative staff.

Based on activity reports generated for the Response to Intervention, Teacher Mentoring, and We Teach All Initiatives, a total of 4,889 instructional and administrative personnel participated in SPDG sponsored training. This number represents 36% of the total number of such personnel employed in the state. As seen in the data chart, this figure is within 3% of the established performance target for this measure.

Performance Measure 1b: This performance measure was calculated by dividing the number of SPDG projects aligned with improvement strategies in the State Performance Plan (SPP) by the number of SPDG projects funded by the SPDG. The SPDG projects included in the approved work scope of this grant are the following initiatives: Mentoring, We Teach All, Response to Intervention, and Reading First. These projects are aligned with improvement strategies in Montana's State Performance Plan for Indicators 1 - Graduation, 2 - Dropout, 3 – Statewide Assessment, 5 – LRE Placement, 9 – Disproportionate Representation in Special Education, and 10 – Disproportionate Representation in Specific Disability Categories.

As indicated in the data chart, a target of 4/4 (100%) was established for this program measure. This reflects the fact that priorities for the SPDG reflect state priority need areas. Actual performance data indicate that this target was met. The Reading First initiative ended during Project Year 4 along with the completion of the federal grant supporting the general education side of this program.



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**SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data** (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

**2. Project Objective**      ☐ Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

Improve the quality of professional development available to meet the needs of personnel serving children with disabilities.

2.a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Percent of professional development activities provided through the SPDG based on scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practices.	PRGM	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			75/ 75	100		158 /158	100

2b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Percent of professional development/training sustained through on-going and comprehensive practices.	PRGM	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			50 /60	83		134/158	85

**Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)**

The second objective, established for the SPDG projects by OSEP, addresses the need to provide professional development activities that are based on scientific- or evidence-based practices, to meet the needs of personnel serving children with disabilities. Achievement of this objective is measured in terms of the percent of professional development activities that are sustained through ongoing and comprehensive practices and the percent that address evidence based practices.

As described relative to the indicators for objective 1, data used to calculate these program measures were taken from professional development and training activity reports submitted to SPDG personnel from April 1, 200 through June 30, 2010. Activity reports were gathered from four initiatives: Response to Intervention (RTI), Reading First, Universal Design/Differentiated Instruction, Teacher Mentoring, and/or We Teach All.

Performance Measure 2a: This performance measure is calculated by dividing the number of SPDG training activities based on scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practices conducted for the current grant cycle by the total number of SPDG training activities conducted during

the current grant cycle. All training activities sponsored through the SPDG are based on scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practices, these include: Response to Intervention, Reading First, Universal Design/Differentiated Instruction, Mentoring and/or Coaching.

Based on activity reports generated for the initiatives listed above, a total of 158 professional development activities were sponsored by SPDG funding and provided scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practices. This exceeds the original target number of activities. As targeted, actual performance numbers indicate 100% of the total number of activities sponsored by the SPDG meet the scientifically-based content criteria.

Performance Measure 2b: This performance measure is calculated by dividing the number of professional development/trainings sustained through on-going and comprehensive practices by the total number of SPDG training activities conducted for the current grant cycle. As indicated in the data table, it was anticipated that 83% of project activities would meet this criteria. Actual performance data indicate that 85% of the 158 SPDG sponsored activities do.





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**3. Project Objective** ☐ Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

Implement strategies that are effective in meeting the requirements described in sections 612(a)(14) of IDEA to take measurable steps to recruit, hire, train, and retain highly qualified personnel in areas of greatest need to provide special education and related services.

3a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
In states with SPDG projects that have special education teacher retention as a goal, the statewide percentage of highly qualified special education teachers in the state-identified professional disciplines.	PRGM	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Special education teacher retention was not a goal within the approved workscope of this grant.



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**4. Project Objective** [ ] Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

To provide schools with multiple avenues of support through which teachers increase their capacity to plan and deliver instruction designed to support the learning of heterogeneous groups of students.

4a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
In schools involved in the We Teach All Initiative, the percentage of students who spend 80% or more of the school day in general education classrooms.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			4856 / 9712	50		5131/10347	50

4b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Percentage of students with disabilities who score in the proficient range on statewide assessment in schools involved in the We Teach All Initiative.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			2914 / 9712	30		2727/5423	50

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

We Teach All is one of the vehicles through which the OPI is assisting teachers to increase their capacity to plan and deliver instruction designed to support the learning of heterogeneous groups of students. With the additional demands that RtI places on a regular education teacher, schools have demonstrated a strong interest in the best practices of differentiated instruction and how to apply it daily in the classroom.

During this project year, a three pronged approach was used to provide professional development on differentiated instruction. A nationally recognize consultant group provided two-day trainings for every CSPD region. Follow-up technical assistance and support was provided to the attending district teams by these same trainers. These trainings were well attended by schools and districts implementing RTI. In addition, this training was provided to the all of the RTI coaches, with an emphasis on how to integrate differentiated instruction into the RTI process. There are on-going plans in place to continue these efforts, which include on-line classes available to individual teachers. These classes will be funded by IDEA Part-B monies.



Second, a series of seven webinars on differentiated instruction and co-teaching were presented by We Teach All consultants and personnel from a school that has adopted differentiated instruction at a high level. Topics presented at the webinars included co-teaching, flexible grouping, classroom management with differentiated instruction, collaboration, and subject specific lessons plans that include differentiated instruction. The webinars were done live and posted on the OPI website for future access by educators and parents.

Finally, the consultants and the high implementing team provided professional development through on-site coaching, webinars for specific districts, and conferences throughout the year. These three approaches provided a sustained agenda of professional development activities to increase educator skills in providing access and progress in the general education curriculum for students with disabilities.

Performance measures established for this objective encompass time in general education to access the general education curriculum, and achievement on assessments aligned to this curriculum. The data source for these objectives come from Montana's Special Education Data Collection and Reporting for education environment and assessment. This is the same data used in our IDEA Part B Annual Performance Report. Data is for the 2009-2010 school year. There are 101 school districts involved in the We Teach All initiative.

Calculations were made as follows:

Performance Measure 4a: This performance measure is calculated by dividing the number of students with disabilities receiving special education and related services for 80% or more of the school day by the number of students with disabilities attending schools involved in the We Teach All initiative.

Performance Measure 4b: This performance measure was calculating by dividing the number of students with disabilities who score in the proficient or above range on Montana's Criterion Referenced assessment (CRT) by the number of students with disabilities tested in the schools involved in the We Teach All initiative.



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**SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data** (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

**5. Project Objective**      ☐ Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.  
To provide more effective and intensive reading interventions for students with disabilities.

5a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Percent of students with disabilities receiving SBRR instruction.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			441 / 5180	9		/	

5b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Percent of students with disabilities in Reading First schools demonstrating gains in reading skills.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			213 / 426	50		/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

As reported in last year's performance report, funding for Montana's Reading First grant ended. As a result, the SPDG's work to "piggyback" on these activities and ensure an emphasis on reading interventions for students with disabilities has been redirected during this last project period.

During previous project years, a focal area for the goal access to the general education curriculum was working in collaboration with Montana's Reading First initiative. The SPDG provided funding for one full-time reading specialist. Montana Reading First had two Cohorts of schools, consisting of a total of 33 schools. SPDG dollars were leveraged to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities were addressed in this statewide initiative.

Still aligned with the goal of increasing access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities, efforts have shifted to expand the RTI professional development in this area, addressing issues of reading for students with disabilities through the use of evidence-based curricula.



Reading First personnel worked in collaboration with the RTI coordinator in providing professional development that relies on lessons learned in the Reading First initiative. Progress in this area is reported relative to Objective 8.



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**6. Project Objective** ☐ Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

To pilot and systematically evaluate training and technical assistance activities with a small number of districts to determine the necessary components for a support model for rural districts to implement an effective RTI model.

6a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Percent of personnel in pilot schools receiving training on RTI practices.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			80 / 94	85		/	

6b. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Percent of students participating in early intervening services prior to a referral to special education.		Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

The Response to Intervention (RTI) pilot project was initiated in the first year of this funding cycle. Four pilot sites in Montana received longitudinal support, best-practices training, and coaching to implement RTI. The four pilot sites continue their work as part of the statewide RTI project and continue to make advancements with RTI implementation, including implementation of research-based curricula in the areas of math and reading. The experiences of these sites enabled the OPI to develop guidance materials (see Performance Measure 7) and to scale up efforts to involve other sites (see Performance Measure 8).

Performance Measure 6a: The RTI Pilot program was completed in Spring 2008. The Montana RTI Project was initiated in order to scale-up the Response to Intervention strategies in the schools across Montana. This new activity is addressed under Performance Measure 8 – to refine and replicate the RTI pilot project to encompass additional LEAs.



Performance Measure 6b: During the time of this grant, no school districts provided early intervening services prior to a referral to special education. Thus, there are no data to report.



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**7. Project Objective**     ☐ Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.  
To develop guidance documents for LEAs that want to implement early intervening strategies.

7a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Percent of districts receiving material that find it useful and clear.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			47/51	92

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

Guidance documents on implementing early intervening strategies, developed after the initial experiences with the pilot RTI districts, are available for download on the Montana RTI website. This site has been frequently updated so that districts could have up-to-date information. The guidance documents include: Montana RTI Frameworks, a resource document for implementing RTI at the local level; best practices research on RTI, materials that have been distributed to the RTI Consultant/Coaches; handouts from most school team training events; and information regarding the work of the four pilot schools.

Beginning in May 2009, the OPI tracked access to the documents and sent an email request that people complete a survey regarding the usefulness and clarity of the material once they had the chance to review and/or use the documents. During this period April 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010, 389 people downloaded the guidance documents and received a single email request to complete the online survey. We have received 70 responses to our survey, for a response rate of 18 percent.

Respondents to the survey represent professors, superintendents, principals, teachers, and other education specialists working in school districts, post-secondary schools and other education organizations.

Performance Measure 7a: Because this measure pertains to Montana schools finding material useful and clear, the measure is as follows: the number of Montana schools reporting they find the material useful and clear, divided by the number of Montana schools responding to the survey.



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**8. Project Objective** ☐ Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

To refine and replicate the RTI pilot project to encompass additional LEAs.

8a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
		Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			220 / 439	50		98 / 427	23

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

RTI expansion efforts were initiated during Project Year 2. Each project year, the implementation process has become more refined and standardized. The grant team has endeavored to respond to best practice information, ensuring its integration in the training and the follow-up coaching provided to each school involved.

During Project Year 5, the first Cohort of elementary schools received a third year of implementation support and training. Secondary schools received their second year of implementation training. RTI Coaches, some in their third year of working on this project, continued to provide support on a regional basis, providing technical assistance and on-site training to the local school(s) with which they were partnered.

The SPDG funds were leveraged to provide additional training for the Coaches on best practice approaches to providing support to schools implementing RTI. These trainings used knowledge gained through Montana's Reading First program and the RTI pilot schools, making the training both collaborative in nature, as well as evidence-based, focusing on what worked best with both of these initiatives. In addition, the Coaches attended the training with their respective school team – assisting the teams during planning and problem solving. Finally, the Coaches received targeted differentiated instruction training that aligned with RTI implementation to assist instructional personnel to provide as much instruction as possible in the general education classroom.

In addition to the use of a coaching strategy for expansion, the five Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) regions have used \$10,000 grants to provide RTI training to schools within their region that are not part of the grant. During Project Year 5, the regions utilized this money to train 47 school teams on the essential components of RtI, and provide on-site coaching support for implementation and standardization

within the school. As a result of these efforts, the Montana RTI Project currently has 98 school-based teams involved in the RTI pilot project, receiving training and support to implement early intervening strategies.

Performance Measure 8a: This performance measure is calculated by dividing the number of schools involved in expansion efforts by the number of school districts in the state. Data sources for this measure are the 2009-2010 school-based team lists for the Montana RTI Project and each Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) region. The Montana RTI Project has 51 school-based teams involved in the Montana RTI Project, receiving training and support to implement early intervening strategies. In addition, the CSPD regions are providing RTI professional development activities to 47 school-based teams.





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**SECTION A - Performance Objectives Information and Related Performance Measures Data** (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

**9. Project Objective** ☐ Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

To provide an array of other professional development activities for LEAs seeking to implement early intervening services.

9a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
		Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			330 / 439	75		98/427	23

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

This objective associated with the RTI initiative was to provide a variety of ways in which districts can gain information and support to implement these practices. Guidance materials were developed and training was conducted through a variety of mechanisms. School/district leadership teams have been trained in RTI implementation and Coaches have been trained to provide support to additional schools. Training materials are posted on the RTI website soon after the completion of the training for future reference and/or download by school teams and coaches. The CSPD regional councils received funding to sponsor team training within each of their regions.

Performance 9a: The performance measure is calculated by dividing the number of districts utilizing RTI training materials by the number of districts in the state. The data source for this Indicator is based on the CSPD RTI and the Montana RTI Project trainings for the 2009-2010 school year.



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**10. Project Objective**     ☐ Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.  
To facilitate and support schools to provide mentor programs for new special education teachers.

10a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
		Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			66 / 439	15		73/427	17

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

A mentoring initiative has been underway since the first year of the SPDG, with origins that predate this project. During the current grant year, the eighth annual mentor institute was held. The institute is organized by SPDG personnel and collaboratively funded with SPDG, Title I-A, Title II-A, and Montana Education Association/Montana Federation of Teachers funding. For this project year, the institute used a train-the-trainer model. This training was longer and more in-depth than the institutes in the past. The focus of the institute is developing quality teacher mentor skills and trainers. In addition, instruction is provided on developing a teacher mentor program in a local school or district utilizing models that have been effective within other Montana districts. The institute focused on providing skills in consultation, collaboration and coaching to potential mentors and trainers so that they can work with new teachers using a variety of skills.

During this project year, two regional trainings were provided for school teams that were in the early stages of adopting a teaching mentor program. The training provided best-practice models of developing a teacher mentor program with regional districts presenting information on their programs. This training provided an excellent foundation for districts to continue in the development of the mentor program and receive additional training from one of the contracted statewide trainers.

Performance Measure 10a: This performance measure is measured by the number of districts adopting mentor programs divided by the number of districts in the state. During the previous grant period, there were 64 districts adopting mentoring programs. There were seven additional districts adopting a mentoring program during this grant cycle, bringing the total number to 73 districts with mentor programs.



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**11. Project Objective**     ☐ Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

To develop professional development options that enable special educators to meet established criteria to become highly qualified in core curriculum content areas.

11a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Percent of special education teachers in Montana meeting highly qualified standards.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			904 /939	96

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

The Montana approved definition for a highly qualified (HQ) teacher is that a teacher who is licensed and endorsed in the areas in which they teach is considered to be highly qualified. A special education teacher at the elementary school level (PK-8) is a highly qualified teacher (HQT) if that teacher is: (a) the sole instructor of any elementary student for 60% or more of the school day; (b) the sole provider of elementary curriculum; , and (c) they meet the NCLB HQ requirements for the Elementary Level. At the secondary level (Grades 5-12) if the special education teacher is the sole instructor of a core academic subject class without input from another teacher who meets the Federal HQ requirements in that core academic subject, the teacher must meet the HQ requirements of NCLB. Secondary special education teachers who teach core academic subjects must meet the content knowledge requirements that apply to general education teachers of core academic subjects.

The percentage of special educators in Montana meeting this standard is the project measure that was established for this objective. The data reported in the project status chart was calculated by dividing the number of special education teachers (FTE) meeting highly qualified standards divided by the total number of special education teachers (FTE) employed in the state. These data are for the 2009-2010 school year. The data source for this indicator was taken from Table 2 – Personnel Employed to Provide Special Education and Related Services for Children with Disabilities, in the Montana’s IDEA-Part B Section 618 report. As indicated in the chart above, actual performance data indicate that 96% of Montana’s special education teachers are highly qualified.



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**12. Project Objective**     ☐ Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

To develop the preparation of highly qualified personnel to work with children in Montana served under Part C.

12a. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
Percent of university courses sponsored by SPDG that incorporate training on evidence-based instructional practices.	PROJ	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/			/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

As discussed in previous reports, the focus of this objective has changed due to the fact that one source of the cross-agency, joint funding, that supported this program was withdrawn. As a result, Montana has taken advantage of a technical assistance opportunity available through a federally funded center that is part of the national technical assistance and dissemination network: The Center for Early Literacy and Learning (CELL) at the Orelan Hawks Puckett Institute. As a new initiative focused on Part C, the focus during the last project period was largely organizational activities with other early childhood partners, and awareness level training. A more systematic implementation and continuation of these efforts was written into Montana's application for a new found of SPDG funding.

During the past grant period, CELL trainers came to Montana and conducted a variety of trainings to provide an awareness and a basic introduction to early literacy and the resources available to support early childhood education from the Center for Early Literacy and Learning (CELL). The awareness trainings ranged from 1-3 hours, with a total of 347 participants including early childhood educators, Head Start staff, child care providers, and parents.





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**13. Project Objective**     ☐ Check if this is a status update for the previous budget period.

OSEP PROGRAM Performance Measure 4.1: The percentage of SPDG projects that successfully replicate the use of scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practice in schools. (Long Term)

4.1. Performance Measure	Measure Type	Quantitative Data					
The percentage of SPDG projects that successfully replicate the use of scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practice in the schools.	PRGM	Target			Actual Performance Data		
		Raw Number	Ratio	%	Raw Number	Ratio	%
			/	20%		/	

Explanation of Progress (Include Qualitative Data and Data Collection Information)

This program measure was developed and introduced to the SPDG projects during the last year of the SPDG cycle. Since there was not discussion about how to operationalize or measure this construct in the SPDG evaluator or director phone calls, internal discussions with the project evaluator have explored how we would define the measure. We wanted to make sure to come up with an approach that takes into account the small size of many of the districts in the state. We have arrived at a definition and have established a performance target (20%), but have not yet put into place the data collection systems that would allow us to capture this information across the multiple SPDG initiative areas. For this reason, we are reporting only the target for this last project period.

The definition we developed for successful replication is as follows: in the districts engaged in a SPDG initiative, successful replication occurs when the district expands an initiative to at least one other building within the district, and this initiative is implemented in the new setting with fidelity.



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**SECTION B - Budget Information** (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

During this final grant period there was \$782,360.64 in expenditures. It was the OPI's understanding in July 2010 that the grant was entirely spent. However in August 2010, \$1,038 was returned unspent from a district. At that late date, we were unable to reallocate the funding to other areas. The grant was fully staffed during the last four years. The grant activities were designed to maximize the resources committed to them. The activities were multi-year projects that work to build sustainable outcomes. As such, the flow of funds over the life of the grant began as a low financial flow as systems were developed and pilot projects were started. As the grant continued, projects were expanded and the funds were expended at a higher rate that facilitated the best results for each grant activity and the needs of the state.

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**SECTION C - Additional Information** (See Instructions. Use as many pages as necessary.)

Montana's State Personnel Development Grant involved the work and collaboration of a number of partners. These partners, unchanged since the original proposal, are as follows:

- At the University of Montana, the SPDG collaborated with Dr. Margaret Beebe-Frankenberger in the area of RtI, Dr. Trent Atkins in the area of RtI Data collection, Susie Morrison in the area of early childhood and Dr. Gail McGregor in the area of Universal Design for Learning (tied to the We Teach All Initiative) and project evaluation activities.
- University courses conducted in early childhood were also done in collaboration with Part C at Montana's Department of Public Health and Human Services.
- Montana's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development Regional Councils collaborated with the SPDG, funding local initiatives with SPDG dollars that were aligned with project goals and the State Performance Plan indicators.
- Parents, Let's Unite for Kids (PLUK), Montana's parent training and information center, was a partner in this effort with current efforts to create RTI implementation information for parents.

- Montana's Parent Information and Resource Center (MT-PIRC) was also a partner in the SPDG project, assisting with the parent involvement portion of RTI by sharing successful collaboration models that have been part of Montana communities and that could be easily replicated at an RTI school.
- The Higher Education Consortium (HEC) which includes general and special education faculty members from institute of higher education in Montana has been a partner. The HEC has provided in-depth discussion and critical feedback regarding effective inclusionary practices that can be utilized at a school level. The HEC's purpose is to interface the higher education system with the evolving needs in professional development in schools to enhance both preservice and inservice educational opportunities, such as RTI.
- Contractors, including personnel from Capital High School in Helena, Montana, and various consultants provided training in differentiated instruction and co-teaching aligned with the SPDG We Teach All initiative and the RTI teams. In addition, Montana's RTI Project utilized consultants and part-time personnel to provide on-site coaching to schools that were part of the project.
- Throughout the SPDG there has been a strong partnership between the Division of Special Education within the Office of Public Instruction and Montana's Reading First initiative, Title I, Title II, Indian Education Division, and the Accreditation Division.
- The Center for Early Literacy Learning (CELL) became a partner on year four of this grant project. CELL is providing training on instructional practices to personnel working in early childhood education.

The project has been fully staffed, during the last four years of the grant with a project director, project coordinator, RTI Coordinator, and an evaluator.

### **Conclusion About Project and Impact**

Montana is a state with limited fiscal resources, so federal dollars to support professional development activities are highly valued at the state and local levels. As the SPDG team compiled information from the final year and examined what was accomplished over the entire project period, we noted both the successes of our efforts, areas of positive impact, and the continuing work the remains to be done.

Some of the biggest successes noted are as follows:

- Over one-third of the state's instructional personnel have been impacted by training focused on scientific or evidence-based instructional practices. This is a significant achievement, particularly because there are not many other sources of professional development readily available to school personnel. Further, the SPDG focused on sustained activities, involving school-based teams, reflecting what is known about effective ways of approaching professional development.
- The SPDG-supported RTI pilot initiative has developed and grown substantially over the 5 years of this project. Beginning as a pilot involving a small sample of schools, the initiative is now being supported by the regional CSPD infrastructure and a network of experienced train-

ers. As reported in relation to Objective 8, 51 school-based teams are now engaged with the Montana RTI project. An additional 47 teams are being supported by the CSPD regions.

- The mentoring initiative represents another success of this project. Each year of the SPDG, new districts adopted mentor programs. This is particularly noteworthy because districts are not required to have these mechanisms in place. The effort has been sustained with an annual summer institute, providing multi-level training to participants. University partners have been engaged in the process, providing for-credit opportunities for program participants to receive the training and then, as part of their for-credit obligations, implement practices in their school/district in the fall.
- The collaborative relationships that have been maintained with a large number of partners throughout this project period. Aligning the efforts of so many different entities on critical goals has been a significant accomplishment.

Some of the continuing challenges that will be a focus of future activities include the following:

- Continued improvement in the collection and use of data to guide project activities is seen as a priority for the future. While strategies to capture data, and the engagement of partners to provide data, clearly improved over the course of the project, these efforts must continue. Since it is likely that any future funded activities will have program measures established up front, that, in and of itself, will be a significant help. More needs to be done to measure fidelity of implementation, to provide individualized, focused support to schools as they move into more advanced levels of implementation of the intervention models supported by the SPDG.
- Work with the RTI network of schools has highlighted the need to have more focused training in two areas: implementation of the model at the secondary level, and evidence-based interventions that are appropriate for students in Tiers 2 and 3.
- The focus of engagement with the Part C programs has shifted during the period encompassed by the SPDG. It will now take some time and preparation to develop initiatives that focus on existing services providers rather than preservice training. There are many opportunities available to align the academic and behavioral models that are being emphasized for the K-12 population with early intervention and preschool programs. Time to develop plans for this alignment is needed, and represents a future focus for the SPDG team.